Transformative relief

Jackson, Simon

DOI:
10.1353/hum.2017.0018

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Citation for published version (Harvard):
Jackson, S 2017, 'Transformative relief: imperial humanitarianism and mandatory development in Syria-Lebanon, 1915-1925', *Humanity*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 247-268. https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2017.0018

Transformative Relief: Imperial Humanitarianism and Mandatory Development in Syria-Lebanon, 1915–1925

Simon Jackson

Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development, Volume 8, Number 2, Summer 2017, pp. 247-268 (Article)

Published by University of Pennsylvania Press
DOI: *https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2017.0018*

Simon Jackson

Transformative Relief: Imperial Humanitarianism and Mandatory Development in Syria-Lebanon, 1915–1925

In August 1916 a family letter reached the busy imperial hub of Port Said in Egypt, sent from Mount Lebanon. Written from a nephew, Habib, to his uncle, it described the famine gripping the wartime Lebanese countryside: "There is no more room in the cemeteries and all the biers are so full of corpses that on several occasions we have been obliged to dig ditches to bury the dead." Food prices had sky-rocketed while exile and conscription had further decimated the population.[1] Habib asked his uncle to send money and emphasized the increasing difficulty of bringing grain from the Syrian interior: "If we have such difficulties with transport in the middle of summer . . . what will we do in winter," he wondered, prophesying that "we will certainly die of hunger."[2] The famine Habib described would last until 1918 and eventually kill some half a million people across Bilād al-Shām—the Syrian provinces of the Ottoman Empire.[3] Conjured by factors including the Entente powers' maritime blockade, Ottoman requisitioning and agricultural strategies, locust swarms and inadequate harvests and bad weather, it was worsened by diseases including malaria, and by speculative hoarding from 1915 onward.

More generally, the famine was one aspect of the wider collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the course of the war. Troubled by internal political upheaval and by war in the Balkans in the years before 1914, the Ottoman state's alliance with Central Powers eventually led to its dissolution in 1918–19 at the moment of defeat. As the Turkish state rose in its place in Anatolia after 1919, the formerly Ottoman Arab provinces were divided between the British and French colonial empires, with the French occupying the territories that would become Syria and Lebanon. By the early 1920s French occupation in Syria and Lebanon was established, under the aegis of the League of Nations mandate system, as an 'A' mandate. Justified diplomatically on the stage of the League of Nations as temporary and developmental, the occupation's political practice in fact entrenched a violent, open-ended mode of colonial paternalism and economic extraction.[4] In 1925–26 an armed uprising known as the Great Syrian Revolt frontally challenged the authority of Paris. Waged against the attempted "complete transformation of traditional society" that characterized French military administration, the revolt was brutally suppressed.[5] French mandate rule would endure in modified form, despite constant opposition, until the close of World War II and the independence of Syria and Lebanon. Throughout the period, however, and particularly at the time of the famine during World War I, in the war's immediate aftermath, and again during the Great Revolt of 1925, humanitarian food relief efforts undertaken by a variety of actors punctuated the political and social history of the

region, responding to the violence it suffered and informing the remaking of the region's civic order.

Historians of the Ottoman Empire have recently returned to the famine of 1915–18, prompted both by the centennial of World War I and by contemporary debates on humanitarian and human rights politics in Syria and Palestine.[6] This work has moved fruitfully from paradigms of "catastrophe and aftermath" toward an emphasis on resilience: the ways people adapted to hardship.[7] But, focused on the social history of the famine, this work understandably draws to a close with the return of food in 1918, or else it focuses on how memory of the famine played out in Lebanese and Syrian society and culture in the 1920s and beyond.[8] But October 1918 and the Mudros armistice between the Ottomans and the Entente were not the end point of emergency humanitarian relief. Instead the war's formal end marked a complex shift—from the soup kitchens of Ottoman military governors in 1915 to those of French-sponsored Beirut notables in 1918, and later to those of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other groups, during the Great Revolt.

Recognizing this, I take a different tack in this essay and show how emergency humanitarian food relief efforts fitted into the gradual establishment of French imperial occupation in Syria-Lebanon between 1915 and 1925. I focus not on the social history of popular resilience but on the delivery of relief by imperial occupying forces, in partnership with an array of brokers and intermediaries that ran from international humanitarian organizations to individual Beirutis.[9] Responding to Abigail Green's admonition that in studies of humanitarian intervention in the "Eastern Question" the "French experience serves as a natural comparator to the Anglo-American world," I draw on French state sources and French Catholic (Jesuit) missionary documents, as well as those of United States Protestant missionary and educational organizations.[10] Further evidence is supplied by the private archives of Lebanese humanitarians, and by the ICRC, League of Nations, and Ottoman Red Crescent archives. The result is a portrait of how such relief initiatives became an intrinsic part of the colonial government of the mandate. They licensed and extended the French occupation and laid the foundation for the particular social and economic development model pursued under mandate rule. The organizational and bureaucratic dynamics of relief also exhibited significant continuities across the period, from the last years of Ottoman rule to the turmoil of the Great Revolt in 1925–26. We should therefore see 1915–25 as a unit—a distinctively transformative "occupation decade" in Bilād al-Shām.

To illustrate this "occupation decade" this essay focuses on three particular moments. It looks first at the wartime famine of 1915–18 and the mix of Ottoman and international, especially United States, humanitarian responses that met it, emphasizing their blend of emergency relief tactics and longer-term developmental prescription. I then turn to the post-armistice period with a focus on 1918–19, showing how French military food relief efforts built up a new civic order in Beirut by relying on Lebanese civilians, a set of humanitarian notables, to broker food distribution. Finally the essay moves to the Great Syrian Revolt of 1925–26 and a renewed wave of relief activity, focusing on the ICRC delegates in Beirut and their struggles with a humanitarian notability now embedded in mandate society and its diaspora.[11]

The conceptual lens deployed to explore these episodes is that of transformative

occupation. This means, in brief, a political project of territorial occupation characterized by systematic tensions between the violent external imposition of development and political change on one hand, and the quest for legitimacy in the name of a future order on the other.[12] This precarious dialectic has been succinctly identified by Nehal Bhuta as oscillating strategically between "subordination" of target populations and a desire to build "legitimation," and oscillating in terms of political scale between "imperial democratization" imposed from the outside, and "national self-determination" built internally.[13]

The dynamics of transformative occupation took shape in this case in two main ways. First, through legitimating humanitarian rhetoric and practices, the wartime famine licensed the subordinating intervention of the French military in relief activities. As an aspect of transformative occupation in Mandate Syria and Lebanon, the military engaged in economic development, as part of a far wider trend of continuing militarization and mass violence in Europe and Western Asia until the mid-1920s.[14] Second, through emergency relief and forms of "humanitarian reasoning," the French occupation facilitated changes to the social fabric in Lebanon and Syria, but especially in Beirut, where they enabled a new notability among Lebanon's urban elites. This notability then built their humanitarian roles into durable and national sociopolitical positions. They joined newly professionalized international networks of humanitarian and philanthropic work at the close of World War I, and in the post-armistice period its members, often Arab Christians, leveraged the symbolic and political legitimacy of emergency relief work to advance national economic development agendas.[15]

Because the concept of transformative occupation emphasizes the constant tension between imperial, violent imposition and internal, national legitimation, and because it shows how emergency relief could blend into developmental agendas, it helps us think through a central question in the historiography of modern humanitarianism—the idea of emergency relief and socioeconomic development as "dual modes" of humanitarianism.[16] Revisionist historians of humanitarianism have fundamentally interrogated the relationship between "state-based efforts at public good" on the one hand, and "modern humanitarianism" on the other, often striving to maintain the distinction between the two.[17] Thus Keith Watenpaugh concedes that "humanitarian action can and often does play a part in establishing the groundwork for a post-revolutionary or postcolonial government" but argues that "when international nongovernmental or intergovernmental bodies mounted efforts to address suffering, they did so outside of the framework of *actual governing*."[18] Here I nuance such claims, exploring how emergency relief activities from 1915 to 1925 were simultaneously conducted partly by governments (imperial, national, and local) and partly by non-governmental actors. The result was a "mixed economy" of relief work, in which "the history of state and non-state aid cannot be easily separated."[19]

This essay argues that such mixed humanitarian relief in fact did influence the patterns of "actual governing" in the French Mandate. Indeed it became an aspect of what Ilana Feldman aptly terms "tactical government" in her study of the British Mandate in Gaza: "a mechanism through which questions of legitimacy that could never be resolved or entirely occluded could be held in abeyance" by a government dependent on the "temporary, the piecemeal, the makeshift."[20] As French rule took

form as a transformative occupation, the relief of humanitarian emergencies recurred, becoming integral to France's shaping of mandate society and to the perpetual deferral of national independence for Syria and Lebanon. In this respect it anticipated the dynamics of later such occupations dealt with in this dossier, for example in the 1980s in Israel-Palestine and the 2000s in Iraq and Afghanistan.[21]

Relief during the First World War

Beirut, bombarded by Italy as recently as 1912 during the Ottoman wars in Libya and the Balkans, saw an initial surge of fear at the onset of wider hostilities in 1914.[22] But fear quickly gave way to renewed calm. Bayard Dodge, a member of the Protestant American educational-missionary circle in Beirut, and later the president of the American University there, recalled that "in fact the mails kept coming into the land for many months and thousands of people were able to receive money from their relatives in Egypt and America."[23] This was vital: remittances had represented a large slice of Ottoman Syria's economy since the 1880s.[24] Steadily, however, and notably from December 1914, Entente forces began to impose a maritime blockade. This was formalized in summer 1915, running from the Aegean island of Samos to the Egyptian frontier, as the Ottoman Third Army itself began to exert an ever tighter military rule on the Syrian provinces, notably through conscription and the control of food and transport.[25]

Far from remaining an offshore presence, the blockade of the Ottoman littoral was a "close," formal one, quite unlike the "distant," reciprocal interdiction that developed in the North Sea.[26] Moreover, the Mediterranean blockade's goal of "economic coercion" was constantly enmeshed with wider "naval and military preoccupations."[27] It became omnipresent far inland, as its ships delivered spies, reconnaissance flights, and food and money to clients, or managed sea-lane checkpoints and occupied in-shore islands.[28] The naval interdiction thereby established the Entente military's use of emergency food supplies in its wider strategy, in ways that would continue once it extended its occupation of the littoral's maritime space to the inland areas after 1918. Sometimes understood as a paradoxical shift, from starving the Ottoman population before 1918 to feeding it after the armistice, the blockade and later humanitarian relief were different facets of the project of French tactical government in the transformative occupation of Syria-Lebanon; or as Daniel Neep argues of French counterinsurgency, two "points along one single spectrum of colonial control" across the militarized decade from 1915 to 1925.[29]

Moreover, like the post-armistice dynamics of relief, the blockade was not simply a bilateral Entente-Ottoman struggle but featured the influence of other protagonists, such as the United States and local brokers. The Beirut newspaper *al-Ittihad al-'Uthmani* noted in December 1914 that Beirutis had little to fear from Entente naval bombardment, since the laws of warfare precluded shelling of open cities. And U.S. diplomats mediated numerous Entente blockade interventions—such as targeted infrastructure demolitions—along the littoral in the early years of the war.[30] At a more global scale, spring 1915 again saw U.S. mediation in the person of William Jennings Bryan, the United States secretary of state, who attempted unsuccessfully to arrange a

deal in which British food interdiction of Germany would be suspended in exchange for German limitation of submarine warfare.[31]

Meanwhile, in Beirut, the same months from mid-1915 saw a tightening of food relief controls as shortage worsened, impacting neutral American organizations around the American hospital and the Syrian Protestant College (SPC). As the American archaeologist Frederick J. Bliss summarized it, "Through the Red Cross and other philanthropic agencies, acting at first openly and later for the most part in an underground manner, a certain alleviation in the economic situation was possible, but it was only a drop in the ocean of starvation."[32] Importantly, such American and Red Cross relief efforts initially included joint work with the Ottoman imperial government. For example, SPC students volunteered as nurses in Nablus, caring for Ottoman soldiers wounded in the Suez campaign in 1915. Moreover, the records of the Ottoman Red Crescent (ORC) show that in November and December 1915 the Ottoman Foreign Ministry asked the ORC to work closely with the American Red Cross in Beirut to establish a "mobile hospital with 100 beds for the Ottoman Army in Syria, in the same style of moral quality of conduct followed by the [American Red Cross's] Istanbul organization." The Ottoman government cited the eleventh article of the 1906 Geneva Convention in its acceptance of this "humanitarian assistance," which was financed by the American Red Cross in Washington D.C. and staffed by the American Medical School in Beirut.[33] Such mixed, improvised relief efforts, partly international and non-governmental and partly imperial military-diplomatic initiatives, were politically ambiguous. They were thus available to interpretations that sought to place them firmly under the aegis of one state authority or another. But even those who engaged in such interpretation were not always state officials. For instance, Louis Cheikho, a French Jesuit scholar and missionary at the St. Joseph University in Beirut, presented American institutions like the SPC in his diary of early 1915 as "making sacrifices to the Red Crescent" in order to remain in operation. Cheikho gave a sectarian reading of the impact of the blockade when he asserted that the appearance of its ships provoked "[the] Turks, who take vengeance through a deluge of vexations against the Christians."[34]

From summer 1915, ʿAzmi Bey, the Ottoman senior official in Beirut province, did work toward Ottoman imperial state domination of relief distribution and tried to subordinate humanitarian action judged a threat to the Ottoman system.[35] It should be noted again here that far from operating "purely" within the arena of emergency aid, such state policies took place within a context of rapid Ottoman nationalization of key infrastructural and developmental sites previously owned by European capitalists, such as the 1915 expropriation of the Lebanon Tramway company.[36]

But despite this increasing Ottoman state monopolization of emergency relief, nonstate relief activities nevertheless continued informally in 1915 and 1916, always in partnership with numerous regional and local actors. This presaged the means through which the constitution of a new mandate "humanitarian notability" took place once the Entente "Army of Occupation" arrived in 1918.[37] For example, in a report on wartime soup kitchens, Bayard Dodge noted that "although the Red Cross society was stopped [by the Ottoman state] on account of its semi-official connection with the American government, the Relief committee in Beirut was permitted to carry on relief

in a quiet way." Spending almost $28,000 of private funds over two years, "so that no-one could say that relief money was spent in profiting American institutions directly or indirectly," this informal American support was for soup kitchens—*mata'im*—at 'Abeih, Brummana, and Suq al-Gharb, among other locations in Mount Lebanon, and also at Sidon.[38] Dodge's account is notable for an insistent, Orientalist paternalism regarding the "pathos and picturesqueness of this [emergency relief] work."[39] It was also characterized by an emphasis on the need for long-term developmentalist modes of government, even as the capacity of international humanitarians to engage in such work was both denied in the long term and endorsed in the immediate moment:

> Road building, spinning, planting, industrial education, needle work;—these are the things which will really aid the people . . . the work cannot be accomplished in a year or even in ten years . . . perhaps the Red Cross can never complete or even half complete its work, but it ought not to build up temporary structures which will later on be uprooted and torn down. Whatever little can be done should be done with reconstruction in view. It should be a well laid foundation to be handed over to more permanent agencies.[40]

This description tallies with Ilana Feldman's concept of tactical government, and with her emphasis on the suspension of the question of the legitimacy of ruling arrangements in contexts where the future is unclear and the present marked out by emergency.[41] Put another way, Dodge here combined "fantasy futurism and enforced presentism."[42] Oscillating between the humanitarian emergency in the immediate present and a reconstruction program a decade into the future, he ignored the fact that the political medium term was dominated by Ottoman and then later by French military rule. In a parallel trend, relating to the personnel of relief and their expertise, American informal relief from 1915 to the war's end was also characterized by emphasis on the emergency importance of "Syrian helpers, who gave a great deal of their time to the work and were unfailing in their readiness to be of service," even as their employers insisted that although "in all the work paid assistants have shown real energy and made the large results possible . . . what is needed today is more [American] men who are familiar with modern ideas of business management."[43]

In the absence of such men, wartime relief distribution relied completely on the social and linguistic expertise of village notables, as Dodge noted:

> Finally by the end of the summer [1916], a regular system of relief was arranged for. It was exceedingly simple. Several of the most public spirited men of the village kindly consented to act as a committee, and they were provided with money to buy grain for the poor. Lists were made out, containing the names of some 120 people in 'Abeih itself and of 150 people in the surrounding villages.[44]

Despite this purportedly "simple" system, which is more revealing of the hagiographic and paternalist tenor of Dodge's humanitarian narrative than of the complex sociology of food distribution, the Ottoman military occupation and Entente blockade together fostered a highly uneven geography of commercial and monetary exchange from 1915 to 1918. This could be navigated only through local intermediation, notably to obtain

accepted currency with which to provide relief supplies. Illustrating the range of organizations involved, Dodge was able to use the school and buildings of the American Mission in 'Abeih, although the American Mission pursued its own relief efforts in Zahle, Tripoli, and elsewhere, and the Mission also engaged in extensive remittance smuggling on the littoral, a dangerous activity that Dodge avoided.[45] As Jane I. Guyer has noted, in situations where standard life-cycle assumptions and the instruments of exchange, debt, and obligation that accompany them no longer hold—as in contexts of famine, war, or military occupation—reserve currencies habitually yield to softer forms of cash as time horizons collapse. In such situations, "converting down" to locally viable means of exchange, monies possessed of a highly contextual emergency value but lacking long-term value, tends to "foreshorten time" to the present.[46] In Beirut by the middle of the war even coinage smuggled onto the coast by Entente blockade vessels, such as the million francs dispatched by the French for famine relief in May 1917, needed to be distributed as gold sovereigns that conformed to the "enforced present" of emergency and were therefore "not dated after 1914 . . . [since] . . . a later dated coin could arouse suspicions."[47] Equally, American

> relief money was purchased at tremendous rates of exchange from investors and money lenders . . . at times it proved almost impossible to procure the cash, even at such exorbitant rates . . . book-keeping became desperately difficult, as the difference between paper and gold money changed every hour, and as each part of the country adopted a different scale of values and system of exchange.[48]

These dynamics would endure until the armistice of 1918 and beyond.[49] It is to the transformative relief activities of the occupying Entente armies in that year that I now turn.

Post-Armistice Relief and Development

Relief activities could not alleviate the worst of the Syrian famine, which by 1917 reached a horrifying apogee in Beirut and elsewhere.[50] In this context, Ottoman officials in January of that year sought to work with the American Red Cross again. A relief ship bound for Beirut, the collier *Caesar*, was even coordinated by Red Cross official Gilbert W. Staub in New York.[51] Bayard Dodge noted that on this occasion "the government and the Red Cross committee worked together" and that in a joint effort to prepare for the shipment's arrival "people were divided into classes and degrees of poverty and everything was ready." Once again in this instance we see the blurring between international humanitarian activity and "actual governing," in this case Ottoman imperial governing, that characterized relief work. Forced to govern tactically, the Ottoman state's involvement with the Red Cross also led it into operations of civic ordering and the administration of categories of poverty. But such actions remained part of the wartime context too and the *Caesar* was eventually caught in the Entente blockade and diverted to Egypt.

Finally, in early October 1918, Entente forces arrived in a devastated Beirut to inaugurate what Dodge, an observer deeply unsympathetic to the prospect of independent Arab rule, called in his notes "the cheer and the excitement of the occupation."[52] The French occupation, especially in 1918–20, aimed to marginalize its

British partners, who, enjoying a troop superiority of nearly ten to one, for their part regarded the French as squatters. It also sought to stabilize and legitimize French rule, seriously challenged by the Hashemite regime in Damascus, in part by engaging in extensive relief activities.[53] To do so, French officials both continued with elements of Ottoman relief regimes, including the reliance on religious networks and spaces such as mosques and churches to house and disburse food, but also sought out notables willing to step into the role of intermediary.[54] These were men capable, much like the village heads who had interpreted and constituted the social hierarchy of need in Mount Lebanon for Dodge's American relief a couple of years earlier, of brokering the norms of food distribution. They had to navigate the post-Ottoman social and institutional landscape while dealing with the militarized logistics of professionalizing, armistice-era humanitarianism.

In Beirut the key figure in this endeavor was Charles Corm, the civilian coordinator of food relief in partnership with the French army. Known for his literary-political writings in the service of a Christian-dominated greater Lebanon, Corm was the son of a Maronite Christian portrait painter.[55] His public Francophilia, expressed in 1919 mainly in his editorship of a magazine titled *La Revue Phénicienne* (Phoenician Review), helped him first to become a key broker in the distribution of humanitarian relief in Beirut, and then subsequently to obtain a major concession for the import of Ford vehicles and parts: a business that made him rich.[56] As part of a hierarchy of some 225 workmen, accountants, clerks, and administrators, Corm worked with the Entente armies from October 1918 onward to deliver 15,000 tons of foodstuffs costing some 20 million francs.[57] Divided into paid, subsidized, and free modes of distribution, the food arrived from a variety of sources, including inland agricultural areas, Egypt, and through cash and in-kind donations from Syrian and Lebanese diaspora philanthropy around the world.

In this latter respect the diaspora in Egypt proved especially significant for its proximity and influence. In addition to public subscriptions to relief appeals, to which businesses in Egypt as well as individuals contributed, church organizations lobbied the French consulate on relief topics. They also competed with the French military for cargo space from Egypt to Beirut, for example on the *Oceanien*, which sailed from Port Said with 600 tons of relief supplies aboard (in addition to 1500 tons of coal for the French navy) on October 23, 1918. Diaspora groups also protested customs barriers and administrative difficulties in delivering humanitarian relief.[58] Beyond the diaspora, other international organizations in Egypt were also involved, reflecting Port Said's status as a global maritime hub as well as an imperial and diaspora node. For example, the Japanese Kuhara Company offered in October 1918 to transport grain to Syria from Japan, making the case that such private sector logistical support would avoid "damaging [French] metropolitan [food] stocks or employing five or six French battleships."[59]

Once in Beirut the food relief was stored in various depots, notably in the Vincentian mission buildings, before distribution at 13 canteens and 55 shops around the city. In November 1918, 65,000 people claimed subsidized food distributed via ration cards. Eligibility was determined by a "Relief Commission" constituted by the French military governor in cooperation with notables drawn from the various confessional groups in Beirut.[60] In his correspondence with French authorities, through his

own boosterish writings on the relief, and in combative letters to a highly critical local press, Corm valorized the food relief operation, seeking to ward off proliferating allegations of personal corruption and food theft by relief workers. He did this partly by donating his own salary to the Red Cross, but principally through quantified accounting techniques that, though riddled with avowed error in internal drafts, allowed him publicly to boast of tonnages of food delivered each month and of the number of kilos of food his staff had individually provided.[61]

Corm's strategic position in the Beirut relief allowed him to use this quantification to insist on a particular reading of its effectiveness.[62] For instance, defending his workers, who had been reported to have taken food from depots, Corm stated that this had been done "on the orders of management, regularly accounted for, and because it is absolutely legitimate that workers who labor from morning to night on the food relief of 60,000 people should themselves be fed by its services through an advance in kind on their rightful pay."[63]

Using both managerial language and also the rhetoric of merit, virtue, and justice identified by Didier Fassin, Corm thereby publicly positioned the hundreds of humanitarian aid brokers as themselves legitimate, indeed privileged, recipients of relief. This was something he also did privately, when he demanded pay raises from French officials for his workers, or defended their efforts in the face of relief recipients whom Corm freely portrayed as hostile, dangerous masses.[64] In 1918–20, we should recall, French imperial rule in the Levant was precarious. It was struggling to assert itself against Hashemite and British competition in inland Syria. Further north it was engaged in a conflict with Turkish nationalist forces. But in Beirut, as Corm's writings show, the stabilization of the imperial transformative occupation regime was enabled by the constitution of a new humanitarian notability, which in turn employed a bureaucratic middle class.[65]

One important result of such armistice-era relief work that will figure later in this account was the Lebanese chapter of the French Red Cross (CRFL). It was founded in 1920 at the close of the postwar relief effort and became involved in various activities alongside French diplomats, such as bringing French nurses with wartime experience on the Western Front to Beirut. Christian Beiruti notables in Charles Corm's milieu dominated its board: men such as the banker, writer, and politician Michel Chiha, who acted as treasurer.[66]

In his correspondence with French officials, Corm therefore ceaselessly emphasized his workers' social credentials, their pre-war business experience and linguistic prowess, and especially their personal selflessness. He ruthlessly leveraged the "register of virtue" that, as Fassin has argued, gives humanitarian operatives a "satisfaction" that "cement[s] a collective experience" mingling the "misfortunes of the poor" with the "symbolic benefit of delivering even partial relief to them."[67] Corm also deployed his knowledge of Beirut food culture, and rearticulated its social hierarchy in terms of relief delivery, when he asked French officials for unmilled corn, rather than milled flour, since "the poor population can use corn to make 'baurgaul' and 'myadla' [*sic*], which are the staples of the indigent classes."[68] At harvest time in summer 1919, he also mediated the French recovery of seed loaned to farmers for the planting season in late 1918.[69]

By thereby contextualizing and facilitating emergency relief for the French, Corm provided the imperial occupying forces with logistical support and cultural purchase. But his role as a humanitarian operative and broker of imperial food relief also reinforced the case he made in his concurrent political writings on Lebanese national economic development in the *Revue Phénicienne*. There he returned constantly and in a paternalist vein to the need to support Lebanese small farmers after the war, with a view to making an expanded Lebanon's food sector self-sufficient and immune to the recurrence of famine. As the intellectual and former Ottoman official Bulus Nujaym noted, in an article in Corm's journal on these lines in summer 1919: "[Every year 10,000 Lebanese go to Egypt or to the United States to feed themselves] . . . while at their very gates spread fertile, little populated lands that their intelligent activity would transform into granaries of abundance [. . .] Rather than colonizing Egypt and America, the Lebanese should colonize their own country."[70] We have seen that the French imperial humanitarian relief operation of 1918–20, in its clear reliance on Corm's organization, therefore laid the foundation for the constitution of a pro-French humanitarian notability in Beirut, powerfully positioned in the political economy of the mandate as it gradually emerged over the coming years. But the experience of imperial humanitarian relief also provided grist for the Lebanese articulation of visions of long-term national economic development and self-sufficiency.

These visions relied on the French-backed expansion of a Beirut-dominated Lebanon, itself envisaged as a bridgehead region in the wider economic conversion of the Syrian plains to the east of Lebanon toward a new status—as breadbasket and goods market to French Mediterranean empire.[71] As the Maronite engineer Albert Naccache put it, in a symptomatic 1919 article in the *Revue Phénicienne* titled "Our Economic Future," Lebanon's developmental trajectory was to be analogous to that of other less agriculturally fertile regions, such as Piedmont, that had triumphed over adversity to lead their wider nations forward.[72]

This developmental ideology was forged in the context of emergency relief delivery by a network of humanitarian notables who would become important figures in the French mandate administration: Naccache himself would become director of public works in mandate Lebanon. In it, we find again the gap between an emergency present, characterized by tactical government and unresolved questions about the political legitimacy of imperial rule, and a fantasized developmental future. Naccache, Corm, and other pro-French humanitarian notables effectively bridged this temporal and political gap by gambling, in the years immediately after 1918, on the successful legitimation of the imperial mandate system. But as the final part of this essay argues, the years to 1925–26 were marked instead by the opposite phenomenon—an increasing reliance on militarized "subordination" that dismayed the mandate's citizens, failed to deliver stability, and instead rapidly produced renewed crises. These crises brought with them the reappearance of humanitarian politics in Lebanon and Syria.[73]

International Humanitarianism and the Great Syrian Revolt

The years from 1922 to 1925–26 saw French imperial financial retrenchment across the empire, and in the newly established Syrian and Lebanese mandates they also saw the increasing militarization of mandate government. Infrastructure and development

programs such as road building were dictated by military priorities and often executed by coerced labor. Meanwhile, elites were dismayed by state failures to invest and by the growing influence of European capitalists seeking to take over concessions to operate public services. The result was an explosive popular insurgency in 1925, met by a brutal counterinsurgency. In this context, humanitarian relief efforts resumed, and numerous organizations competed to provide supplies. This section concentrates on the ICRC presence in Beirut, and its difficulties faced with the entrenched Lebanese humanitarian notability and with the suspicions of several actors, including the imperial state, toward any humanitarian activity it did not control.[74]

In 1922 the French parliament slashed the budget it allocated to nonmilitary spending in the emerging Syrian mandate, provoking the resignation of High Commissioner General Henri Gouraud, who at the Versailles peace conference had cited French emergency relief work in 1918 as a major justification for a wider French mandate.[75] In a context of post-armistice imperial austerity, French resources were concentrated on consolidating military rule, especially at the border with Turkey, and on the expansion and management of the means of military mobility through road building. Public services were substantially farmed out to private European interests and to a lesser degree to other private actors—often Lebanese notables such as Charles Corm, who by now had begun to import Ford vehicles into the country as sole licensee.[76] As the conservative French newspaper *Le Matin* argued, in the wake of an economic mission of the French Maritime and Colonial League in September 1922, "The goal of the Mandate . . . has always been to restore Syria to the point that it will have less recourse to the gratuitous liberality of its tutor and advisor."[77]

The consequences of this mode of rule, reliant on coercion and institutionally vested in the army, crystallized most obviously in the Jabal Druze, a mountainous region subjected to a road-building program, and the cradle of the 1925 revolt. There, the military governor, Gabriel Carbillet, had set out to "transform the Druze community" through a mixture of armed force and socioeconomic institution building, eventually provoking armed uprising.[78] The insurgency in turn prompted the humanitarian color of the French occupation to switch from militarized economic development back to emergency relief.

Prompted by the flood of Syrian and Lebanese refugees from the fighting, the ICRC in Geneva dispatched two representatives to Beirut, Raymond Schlemmer on November 27, 1925, and, upon his return to Geneva the following month, Georges Burnier.[79] Both had experience in humanitarian work in the post-armistice Ottoman lands. Schlemmer had worked regularly with the nationalist Turkish Red Crescent on "technical issues" related to refugee populations.[80] And Burnier had worked for the ICRC in Istanbul in 1921–22, on the Mixed Committee of Foreign Relief Agencies, and was still based there in 1925.[81]

ICRC efforts encountered, and contributed to, a busy and fractured humanitarian field, characterized, as in the wartime years, by the involvement of neutral institutions and by cooperation and conflict with the mandate's humanitarian notability, both in Beirut and in the regional and global diaspora. Schlemmer and Burnier found themselves particularly in competition with the Lebanese branch of the French Red Cross but were also faced with efforts by Save the Children, the Soviet Red Cross, and the

Turkish Red Crescent (the latter two encouraged by their respective state authorities).[82] The ICRC delegates' search for funds and the attendant credibility led them to members of the Syrian nationalist movement in Cairo and provoked suspicion from French officials and Lebanese Christian notables. Indeed, as Daniel Neep has noted in his study of the French counterinsurgency's military and spatial dynamics, humanitarian relief, as a form of "disputed universalism," rapidly became a political site in the unfolding of hostilities.[83]

Accordingly, neither ICRC delegate found progress easy in Beirut. They encountered particular opposition from the CRFL, the Lebanese chapter of the French Red Cross, dominated by Christian Beirut notables from Charles Corm's milieu. As Burnier noted, in a manner suggestive of the imperial state's delegation of relief responsibilities to rival humanitarian organizations: "We have the support of the authorities, who will do what they can to put into place the program devised by Mr. Schlemmer, but we will have nothing but jealousy, chicanery and hostility from the local [humanitarian] societies and no moral or material support. The other foreign [humanitarian] societies . . . are neutral."[84] This opposition from the established humanitarian notability in Beirut was compounded by the difficulties of fundraising for refugees from the Syrian Revolt, whom Schlemmer numbered at 9,000 in the main cities of Lebanon and Syria in early December 1925, and who were in need of winter clothes and blankets.[85] National Red Cross associations in Europe pleaded a lack of funds to the ICRC, due to their existing fundraising campaigns for refugees from the concurrent anti-French Rif war in Morocco.[86] The absence of foreign donations, as Burnier noted in early January 1926, in turn undermined the ICRC's credibility in Beirut and its ability to challenge the CRFL. As Burnier warned, "We need foreign money to set up the authority of our committee."[87]

As the revolt in Syria and its suppression became the subject of increasing press attention and diplomatic criticism worldwide, the attendant humanitarian relief became an arena for the pursuit of political advantage. This was not a new dynamic: as we have seen, Charles Corm had accumulated political and economic advantage from his humanitarian work, and the Syrian and Lebanese diaspora had engaged in comparable strategies during and after the war years. From Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for example, the Syro-Brazilian Red Cross Society had asked the ICRC in 1919, in the context of the power struggle over the fate of Syria and Lebanon, to be accredited as the new "national" Syrian Red Cross and requested to transfer to Beirut "as soon as the mother country recovers her liberty and independence."[88]

In 1925, other global humanitarian actors also got involved in the refugee crisis prompted by the Revolt, with the Soviet Red Cross and Save the Children both contributing support for Syrian children and assisting in propaganda efforts in the winter months of 1925–26. Likewise, in December 1925 the Turkish foreign minister, during a visit to Geneva, donated 500 Swiss francs for "Muslim refugees in Syria" and suggested that the reconstructed Turkish Red Crescent, now located in Ankara, might collaborate with the ICRC in Syria by sending a medical mission. As an ICRC official tellingly argued, this "would give our delegate much greater weight among the natives and allow for the collection of sizeable sums."[89] In Beirut, however, the reality was that the majority of funds for Red Cross relief in the winter of 1925–26 came from the

French army and French High Commission, or from the government of Lebanon. Direct state welfare also included anti-malarial measures, which were undertaken among the refugees by the "Hygiene and Public Relief Service" of the High Commission, which also housed refugees in Beirut. But state actors, as in the Ottoman context of 1916, also "discreetly called on private charity," often coordinated by elite women in Beirut, to raise funds.[90] Meanwhile donations from the French metropole were funneled from the French Red Cross to the CRFL, which in turn distributed them to its regional branches, leaving only a quarter for the ICRC. Burnier noted bitterly in this latter case that "this is about the best we can hope for" and repeatedly expressed concern that the lack of funds donated from abroad—notably from diaspora sources in Egypt, the United States, and Turkey—would weaken the ICRC's ability to attract donations in Beirut itself.[91]

As the Turkish government's intervention for Muslim refugees suggests, relief work was informed by different states' political agendas that sought, as during World War I, to pull partly nonstate humanitarian work fully back under national or imperial auspices. Evidently, such efforts frequently had a religious and even sectarian element, as seen above in the case of the Jesuit missionaries' 1915 critique of their American Protestant rivals. For example, the founding of a "Muslim Relief" committee in Beirut in January 1926 by Hassan Bey Makhzoumi, and its affiliation with the International Relief Committee on February 8, 1926, was received especially badly by the CRFL, which petitioned the French high commissioner against the move.[92] The CRFL complained that the new committee would join the ICRC campaign in creating "competition that will stop . . . money raising in the local population." Meanwhile the High Commission suspected donations to the new organization, mainly raised through small weekly subscriptions among some six hundred people in Beirut and generating 200 Syro-Lebanese pounds, of being passed to the "insurgents." The French authorities duly asked the ICRC to keep watch over this.[93]

In this context, as Burnier noted in exasperation a few days later, in response to requests from Geneva to avoid conflict with the French Red Cross, "Whatever we do, whatever concessions we make, never and at no price will we have the collaboration of the Red Cross of Lebanon [the CRFL]. They will never accept our presence here and never pardon the ICRC for having helped the establishment of a [Muslim] aid organization."[94] In search of funds to cement the ICRC position, Burnier instead began to work closely with ICRC delegate and lawyer Francis Peter in Cairo, who had received donations from the "Cairo Relief Committee" (CRC). Michel Lutfallah and other members of the Syrian nationalist organization known as the Syrian-Palestinian Congress ran the latter organization.[95] Short of resources in Beirut with which to establish credibility, and conscious of French anxiety about support for the revolt concealed as humanitarian fundraising, Schlemmer, Burnier, and Francis Peter all put pressure on Lutfallah and his supporters to send their funds to Syria via the neutral ICRC. But the political traffic was not one way: Lutfallah also worked to use partnership with the ICRC as a legitimating political tactic—"Mr. Peter is going to collaborate with us," he noted, having invited Peter to join the CRC as a committee member.[96]

French diplomats in Cairo swiftly responded that Lutfallah and the CRC were not

benevolent diaspora humanitarian fundraisers but "leaders of the Druze revolt" and threatened that "any cooperation whatsoever of [the ICRC] with the Cairo group [the CRC] would compromise the work of the former . . . [and added that] . . . the High Commissioner of Syria would not hesitate to oppose the action of the ICRC in the country whose Mandate he directs." The French official closed the interview with Francis Peter by stating baldly that "those before us are not belligerents but insurgents, and have no right to benefit from the international practices of humanity, which they themselves unrelentingly disdain."[97]

Despite these warnings, the ICRC's need for funds in Beirut, and Burnier's negotiations with the French High Commission and civilian officials, eventually resulted in the ICRC being allowed by the French military to coordinate CRC donations, but restricted to medical supplies for hospitals, and only outside the militarized zones where fighting was ongoing. Burnier noted that the French *military* officials' concerns about humanitarian supplies crossing the front line were the key factor preventing the flow of more substantial relief from Cairo. He added that the *civil* authorities' preoccupation with the well-being of the population was at least rhetorically broader, as those officials believed (despite the brutal ongoing counterinsurgency) that "some form of help at the moment would be an incontestable proof of the mandate's pacific intentions." "Unfortunately," Burnier concluded, in a vein suggestive of the imperial military's hegemonic role in arbitrating humanitarian politics during the Great Revolt, "all humanitarian ideas . . . must give way before military necessity."[98]

Despite these radical limitations, the CRC in Cairo agreed to send money via the ICRC. But it also criticized the domination of the international relief committees in Beirut and Damascus, with the explicit exception of the ICRC and the American Near East Relief, by a pro-French humanitarian elite. The CRC suggested, fruitlessly in the event, both the creation of relief stations "inside the zone of insurrection" and the addition of further "notables" of its own suggestion to the international committees, "who know the country well and enjoy the confidence of all and are held in honor above all suspicion."[99]

But the very claim to a legitimate, internally generated, and universally accepted administration of humanitarian aid was in 1925–26 Syria and Lebanon essentially another means of disputing the universalism of humanitarian practice. The French transformative occupation of their mandate territories had made of humanitarian relief a key instrument of imperial "tactical government," even as numerous international and national groups sought to capitalize on its practices for their own purposes.[100]

Conclusion

Between 1915 and 1925, Syria and Lebanon witnessed a decade of transformative occupation, by the Ottoman state's war machine and then by imperial France. At the end of this period, in the wake of the Great Revolt, emergency forms of humanitarian activity continued to be enlaced with schemes for economic development. These schemes themselves accrued renewed discursive and political vitality from the process of emergency relief. During the Great Revolt, for example, refugee flows in particular became sites for the elaboration of discourses that shaded from the provision of emergency seed for late winter grain planting, with a view to maintaining food supply and

reducing emergency relief budgets by reestablishing the food autonomy of refugees, into wider projects to reverse the flow of people from rural areas into the cities and to improve agriculture in the mandate territories in the long term.[101] As privileged targets of internationalist humanitarian intervention, Armenian refugee populations in Syria played an exceptional role in this discussion. Their settlement on the land, and later in suburbs of Aleppo and Beirut, became an established aspect of mandate state propaganda and of League of Nations internationalist humanitarianism.[102] Thus the Danish League of Nations commissioner Karen Jeppe, borrowing from the well-established tropes of mandate development rhetoric, noted in a report from Aleppo of August 1925:

> Everybody knows that the future of Syria depends upon an intense cultivation of her fertile soil, but for this, a stronger feeling of confidence must be created. The capital hangs on in the cities where it can not even be fully utilized, and the people are crowding together there seeking employment in vain, while the land is waiting for the capital and the workforce to come.[103]

The missing "feeling of confidence" Jeppe identified can be read as the failure of the mandate to achieve the legitimate and resilient new order that Nehal Bhuta has argued transformative occupations seek alternately through subordination and legitimation, and as a symptom of French reliance on "tactical government." The humanitarian notability of Beirut had staked its hopes on a successful transformative occupation in the post-armistice period. While some like Charles Corm had successfully leveraged their humanitarian work into personal position and influence over the direction of national economic development in Lebanon, the occupation's wider goals collapsed in the Great Revolt.[104] The Revolt would instead prompt the French mandate system in Syria and Lebanon to reach an alternative mature form. Civil and military administration were finally divided, and a set of hollow constitutional arrangements were put into place, managed by French officials in alliance with paternalist Syrian and Lebanese elites. The political situation moved toward the abortive negotiation of independence with nationalist movements in 1936 and then the realization of independence after World War II. The "transformative occupation decade" of 1915–25 thereby drew to a close, but its legacies proved enduring, and humanitarianism in its different varieties remained significant under the new dispensation.[105]

NOTES

My thanks to the Corm family for their invitation to visit their archive in Beirut, and to Tamara Sawaya and Joseph Kiwan for their help there. Warm thanks are also due to A. Tylor Brand, Matthew Hilton, Francesca Piana, Tehila Sasson, Benjamin Thomas White, the *Humanity* editorial collective, and the anonymous reviewer for advice and criticism on various drafts. All errors are my own. I'm grateful to Hamza Meddeb for assistance with translations and to Sinan Çetin for research assistance. I thank the Max Weber Programme and Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute, the Leverhulme Trust's Early Career Fellowship scheme, and the University of Birmingham for financial support. Finally, this project would not have been initiated or completed without the encouragement and the scholarly example of A. Dirk Moses.

1. On food prices in the famine, see Zachary Foster, "The 1915 Locust Attack in Syria and Palestine and its Role in the Famine during the First World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, no. 3 (2015): 370–94. See also Melanie Schulze Tanielian, "Feeding the City: The Beirut Municipality and the Politics of Food during World War I," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 4 (November 2014): 744.

2. Centre des Archives Diplomatiques de Nantes, France (hereafter CADN), Port Said, Consulat, 542PO/1 67, Dossier: Indigence des Populations/Envoie de Secours, 1916–19.

3. Elizabeth Thompson, *Colonial Citizens: Republican Rights, Paternal Privilege, and Gender in French Syria and Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 20–38.

4. Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). Standard works on the Syrian Mandate include Philip S. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920–1945* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987); Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*; Michael Provence, *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005); Benjamin Thomas White, *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011).

5. Daniel Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate: Insurgency, Space and State Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 69.

6. Linda Schatkowski-Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915–1918 in Greater Syria," in *Problems of the Modern Middle East in Historical Perspective: Essays in Honour of Albert Hourani*, ed. John P. Spagnolo (Reading: Ithaca Press, 1996), 229–58; Salim Tamari, *Year of the Locust: A Soldier's Diary and the Erasure of Palestine's Ottoman Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Melanie Tanielian, "Politics of Wartime Relief in Ottoman Beirut (1914–1918)," *First World War Studies* 5, no. 1 (2014): 69–82; Tanielian, "Feeding the City"; Najwa al-Qattan, "When Mothers Ate Their Children: Wartime Memory and the Language of Food in Syria and Lebanon," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 4 (November 2014): 719–36; Abigail Jacobson, "A City Living through Crisis: Jerusalem during World War I," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 1 (April 2009): 73–92; Roberto Mazza, "Dining Out in Times of War: Jerusalem 1914–1918," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 41 (Spring 2010): 52–58. See also Fritz Grobba, *Die Getreidewirtschaft Syriens und Palastinas seit Beginn des Weltkrieges* (Hanover: Orient-Buchhandlung Heinz Lafaire, 1923); Nicholas Z. Ajay Jr., "Mount Lebanon and the Wilayah of Beirut, 1914–1918: The War Years," (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1973). On contemporary Syria and Palestine, see representatively, Samar Yazbek, *A Woman in the Crossfire: Diaries of the Syrian Revolution*, trans. Max Weiss (London: Haus, 2012); Lori Allen, *The Rise and Fall of Human Rights: Cynicism and Politics in Occupied Palestine* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2013).

7. Tanielian, "Feeding the City," 740. See for further programmatic analysis on food as analytic lens, Melanie Schulze Tanielian, "Food and Nutrition (Ottoman Empire/Middle East)," in *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. Ute Daniel et al. (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 2014), accessed December 23, 2014. http://dx.doi.org/10.15463/ie1418.10322.

8. See also Abdallah Hanna, "The First World War according to the Memories of 'Commoners' in the Bilād al-Shām," in *The World in World Wars: Experiences, Perceptions and Perspectives from Africa and Asia*, ed. Heike Liebau et al. (Boston: Brill, 2010), 299–313.

9. See on the previous period Caesar E. Farah, *The Politics of Interventionism in Ottoman Lebanon, 1830–1861* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2000); Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815–1914* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press,

2011); an excellent recent discussion of the 1918–1922 period in the region of Cilicia is Chris Gratien, "The Sick Mandate of Europe: Local and Global Humanitarianism in French Cilicia, 1918–1922," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 1 (2016): 165–90.

10. Abigail Green, "Humanitarianism in Nineteenth-Century Context: Religious, Gendered, National," *Historical Journal* 57, no. 4 (December 2014): 1172. On French humanitarianism and missionaries, see JP Daughton, *An Empire Divided: Religion, Republicanism, and the Making of French Colonialism, 1880–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

11. My thinking on post-armistice periodization was informed by Christine Philliou, "Ottoman Authority Displaced, 1918–1923" (paper presented at the conference "The Mashriq in the Age of Late Imperialism: The Mandates in Global Perspective, Princeton University," September 20–22, 2013); Provence, *The Great Syrian Revolt*.

12. See the introduction to this dossier for a full discussion of the term.

13. Nehal Bhuta, "The Antinomies of Transformative Occupation," *European Journal of International Law* 16, no. 4 (September 2005): 724–40.

14. Robert Gerwarth puts at four million the combined casualties caused by military and paramilitary violence in Russia, Finland, east central and southeastern Europe and in the former Ottoman lands in the period 1918–23. Robert Gerwarth, personal communication, June 2014. See Mustafa Aksakal, "The Ottoman Empire," in *Empires at War, 1911–1923*, ed. Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Andrew Tait Jarboe, *Empires in World War I: Shifting Frontiers and Imperial Dynamics in a Global Conflict* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 303–76.

15. Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate*; Julia Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Branden Little, "An Explosion of New Endeavours: Global Humanitarian Responses to Industrialized Warfare in the First World War Era," *First World War Studies* 5, no. 1 (2014): 1–16; Keith David Watenpaugh, "The League of Nations' Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism, 1920–1927," *American Historical Review* 115, no. 5 (December 2010): 1315–39; Keith David Watenpaugh, "Between Communal Survival and National Aspiration: Armenian Genocide Refugees, the League of Nations, and the Practices of Interwar Humanitarianism," *Humanity* 5, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 159–81.

16. Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: The Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 19; see also Michelle Elizabeth Tusan, *Smyrna's Ashes: Humanitarianism, Genocide, and the Birth of the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012). See also Joseph M. Hodge, "Writing the History of Development (Part 1: The First Wave)," *Humanity* 6, no. 3 (Winter 2015): 429–63.

17. Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010); Emily Baughan, " 'Every Citizen of Empire Implored to Save the Children!' Empire, Internationalism and the Save the Children Fund in Inter-War Britain," *Historical Research* 86, no. 231 (February 2013): 116–37.

18. Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones*, 9 (emphasis added); and on the wider post-Ottoman context, see Elizabeth F. Thompson, *Justice Interrupted: The Struggle for Constitutional Government in the Middle East* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2013), 91–117; Keith David Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East?: Revolution, Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Arab Middle Class* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006).

19. Tehila Sasson, "From Empire to Humanity: The Russian Famine and the Imperial Origins of International Humanitarianism," *Journal of British Studies* 55, no. 3 (July 2016): 522.

20. Ilana Feldman, *Governing Gaza: Bureaucracy, Authority and the Work of Rule, 1917–1967* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2008), 20–21.

21. See Seth Anziska's essay in this dossier for example.

22. J. M. Winter, *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin, 1914–1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2015).

23. American University of Beirut Archive and Special Collections (AUB/ASC) Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, Bayard Dodge to C. H. Dodge "Relief Work in Syria during the period of the War." On American missionaries in Beirut, see Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007).

24. Andrew Arsan, *Interlopers of Empire: The Lebanese Diaspora in Colonial French West Africa* (London: C. Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2014), 61.

25. Ajay Jr., "Mount Lebanon and the Wilayah of Beirut," 183–216.

26. Isabel V. Hull, *A Scrap of Paper: Breaking and Making International Law during the Great War* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2014), 144–56; Archibald Colquhoun Bell, *A History of the Blockade of Germany and of the Countries Associated with Her in the Great War, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, 1914–1918* (London: H.M. Stationery Off., 1937); Nicholas A Lambert, *Planning Armageddon: British Economic Warfare and the First World War* (Cambridge; Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

27. Bell, *A History of the Blockade of Germany*, 374.

28. L. B Weldon, *"Hard Lying": Eastern Mediterranean, 1914–1919* (London: Jenkins, 1925); Cecil Vivian Usborne, *Smoke on the Horizon: Mediterranean Fighting, 1914–1918* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Limited, 1933).

29. For colonial control, see Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate*, 45. For the "paradoxical account," see, for example, Schatkowski-Schilcher, "The Famine of 1915–1918," 250. On postwar flux, see Watenpaugh, *Being Modern in the Middle East*, 8.

30. *Al-Ittihad al-'Uthmani* December 17, 1914, 2, cited in Ajay Jr., "Mount Lebanon and the Wilayah of Beirut," 205; Usborne, *Smoke on the Horizon; Mediterranean Fighting, 1914–1918,* 33–34.

31. Hull, *A Scrap of Paper*, 173; a German submarine would sink a French blockade cruiser off Cyprus in February 1916 as detailed in Weldon, *"Hard Lying,"* 115.

32. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 17, file 2.2, "The Question of Syria: Retrospect and Prospect," Dr. Frederick J. Bliss.

33. Türk Kızılay Derneği Arşivi, (Red Crescent Archive) Ankara, Turkey (hereafter TKA), box 94, document 93, Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Red Crescent Society, November 20, 1915. On the Red Crescent in the humanitarian historiography, see Johannes Paulmann, "Conjunctures in the History of International Humanitarian Aid during the Twentieth Century," *Humanity* 4, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 222.

34. Archives Jésuites de Vanves, France (AJV), Missions, Syrie-Arménie, 28, Diary of Father Cheiko, manuscript p. 538, dated January 1915. On the pre-1914 French missions, see Chantal Verdeil, *La mission jésuite du Mont-Liban et de Syrie: 1830–1864* (Paris: Indes savantes, 2011); Jérôme Bocquet, *Missionnaires français en terre d'islam: Damas, 1860–1914* (Paris: Indes savantes, 2005); on Cheikho's background, see Asher Kaufman, " 'Tell Us Our History': Charles Corm, Mount Lebanon and Lebanese Nationalism," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 3 (May 2004): 3.

35. Tanielian, "Politics of Wartime Relief in Ottoman Beirut (1914–1918)," 73; on the prewar context, see Nadir Özbek, "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism, and the Hamidian Regime, 1876–1909," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 1 (February 2005): 59–81.

36. Archives Diplomatiques, La Courneuve, France, (henceforth AMAE), Blocus 1914–18, carton 145 (Turkey), Ministry of Blockade, Enemy Foreign Commerce—Turkey, "Development of Economic Nationalism," June 3, 1918. On Ottoman economic nationalism, see Eyal Ginio, *The Ottoman Culture of Defeat: The Balkan Wars and Their Aftermath* (London: Oxford University Press, 2016).

37. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, Bayard Dodge to C. H. Dodge "Relief Work in Syria during the period of the War."

38. About $650,000 in 2012, although significant difficulties in changing currency, discussed below, in wartime Ottoman Beirut makes an exact calculation very difficult.

39. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, Bayard Dodge report on wartime soup kitchens. See also Aaron Tylor Brand, " 'That They May Have Life': Famine Relief and the Syrian Protestant College in World War I," in *The American University of Beirut: A Century and a Half*, ed. Bilal Orfali, Lina Choueiri, and Nadia El Cheikh (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 2016).

40. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, "Bayard Dodge report."

41. Ilana Feldman, *Governing Gaza: Bureaucracy, Authority and the Work of Rule, 1917–1967*, 20.

42. Jane I. Guyer, "Prophecy and the Near Future: Thoughts on Macroeconomic, Evangelical, and Punctuated Time," *American Ethnologist* 34, no. 3 (August 2007): 409–10.

43. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, Bayard Dodge to C. H. Dodge "Relief Work"; on professional humanitarianism in the USA in this period, see Irwin, *Making the World Safe*.

44. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, "Bayard Dodge report."

45. My thanks to A. Tylor Brand for helping me disaggregate the American relief efforts.

46. Jane I. Guyer, "Soft Currencies, Cash Economies, New Monies: Past and Present," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109, no. 7 (February 2012): 2220. See also CADN, Port Said, Consulat, 542PO/1 67, Dossier: Indigence des Populations/Envoie de Secours, 1916–19, Maronite Patriarch to French Consulate Port Said on need for Turkish currency to be bought in Palestine and sent to Lebanon, April 25, 1918.

47. Nicholas Z. Ajay, "Political Intrigue and Suppression in Lebanon During World War I," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5, no. 2 (April 1974): 142. On currency smuggling for famine relief, see CADN, Port Said, Consulat, 542PO/1 67, Dossier: Indigence des Populations/Envoie de Secours, 1916–19, French Consul Port Said to French Naval Division Syria, May 14, 1917.

48. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, "Bayard Dodge report."

49. In Anatolia by 1918 this "foreshortening of time" had even led, according to the *Journal de Genève* in August of that year, to booming use of gold Swiss watches as a store of value. *Journal de Genève*, August 29, 1918, cited in AMAE, Blocus 1914–18, carton 145 (Turkey), Ministry of Blockade, Enemy Provisioning, Turkey, September 18, 1918.

50. Tanielian, "Feeding the City," 752.

51. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, Letter from Gilbert W. Staub to Bayard Dodge, December 16, 1916.

52. AUB/ASC, Bliss Papers, box 18, file 3, Bayard Dodge to C. H. Dodge "Relief Work." On Arab nationalism in this context, see James L. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties Nationalism and Mass*

Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), and Lori Allen, "The Nation as Moral Community: Language and Religion in the 1919 King-Crane Commission," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of the Middle East Mandates*, ed. Cyrus Schayegh and Andrew Arsan (London: Routledge, 2015), 258–68.

53. Simon Jackson, "Compassion and Connections: Feeding Beirut and Assembling Mandate Rule in 1919," in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of the Middle East Mandates*, 62–75; on troop numbers, Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate*, 25, and Jean-David Mizrahi, "Une relecture de l'événement?: La chute du Royaume arabe de Damas en 1920," *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée*, no. 105–106 (December 2004): 309–25.

54. Nefissa Naguib and Inger Marie Okkenhaug, eds., *Interpreting Welfare and Relief in the Middle East* (Boston: Brill, 2008).

55. Asher S. Kaufman, *Reviving Phoenicia: In Search of Identity in Lebanon* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004).

56. On brokerage, see E. Natalie Rothman, "Genealogies of Mediation: 'Culture Broker' and Imperial Governmentality," in *Anthrohistory: Unsettling Knowledge, Questioning Discipline*, ed. Edward Murphy et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 74. Corm's role as Fordist and Ford importer is discussed in my forthcoming book, *Mandatory Development: The Global Politics of Economic Development in the Colonial Middle East*.

57. Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 60.

58. CADN, Port Said, Consulat, 542PO/1 67, Dossier: Indigence des Populations/Envoie de Secours, 1916–19, Union of Syrian Ladies to French Consulate Port Said requesting help with relief shipments, December 28, 1918; Syrian National Group to French Consulate Port Said complaining of customs barriers to relief parcels, December 28, 1918; French Consulate Port Said to Foreign Ministry Paris detailing *Oceanien* cargo for Beirut, October 23, 1918.

59. CADN, Port Said, Consulat, 542PO/1 67, Dossier: Indigence des Populations/Envoie de Secours, 1916–19, Kuhara Mining Co. to French Consul Port Said, October 18, 1918.

60. J. De La Remoulière, "L'oeuvre du Ravitaillement Civil de Beyrouth," *La Revue Phénicienne* 1, no. 1 (July 1919): 55.

61. Corm Archive, Beirut, Lebanon, Ravitaillement/Food Programme, (henceforth CAB/RFP), binder 1, Musa Mubarak to Charles Corm, October 7, 1919, on personal corruption. On accounting errors CAB/RFP, binder 3, 'État de la caisse,' March 31, 1919.

62. On quantification through calorific measurement in the North Atlantic context, see Nick Cullather, "The Foreign Policy of the Calorie," *American Historical Review* 112, no. 2 (April 2007): 337–64.

63. CAB/RFP, binder 9, Undated draft of letter by Corm to *As-Salam* (*sic*) newspaper.

64. Didier Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 66. On pay demands, see CAB/RFP, binder 6, Letter to Charles Corm from Chief Accountant and Chief Clerk of Free and Semi-Free Relief, September 26, 1919. On rioting crowds at food distributions, see CAB/RFP, binder 6, Corm to Doizelet, August 30, 1919.

65. For an analogous dynamic in occupied Afghanistan post-2001, see Antonio Giustozzi's and Artemy Kalinovsky's essay in this issue.

66. French Red Cross Archive, Paris (henceforth CRF), Société française de secours aux blessés militaires (SFSBM), Annuaire 1926. On French nurses' work in Beirut, Tripoli, and Damascus, see Bulletin of SFSBM, October 1920, 30–33. On Chiha's role as constitutional thinker

and his friendship with Charles Malik, see Glenn Mitoma, *Human Rights and the Negotiation of American Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 106–7.

67. Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason*, 70.

68. CAB/RFP, binder 9, Corm to the Military Governor of Beirut, undated. See also Jackson, "Compassion and Connections," 64–68.

69. CAB/RFP, binder 2, Letter on seed recovery from Copin, Chief Administrator of Occupied Enemy Zone West to regional administrators, June 24, 1919.

70. Bulus Nujayam, "La question du Liban: Étude de politique économique et de statistique descriptive," *La Revue Phénicienne* 2 (1919): 75. See also Simon Jackson, " 'What Is Syria Worth?': The Huvelin Mission, Economic Expertise and the French Project in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1918–1922," *Monde(s)* 2, no. 4 (September 2013): 100.

71. On the French Mediterranean, see Patricia Lorcin and Todd Shepard, eds., *French Mediterraneans: Transnational and Imperial Histories* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015).

72. *La Revue Phénicienne* 1 (July 1919): 5.

73. Bhuta, "The Antinomies of Transformative Occupation," 724.

74. On the ICRC, see Davide Rodogno, "The American Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross' Humanitarian Politics and Policies in Asia Minor and Greece (1922–1923)," *First World War Studies* 5, no. 1 (2014): 83–99.

75. Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 63; Maurice Desjardin, *Le problème Syrien au point de vue économique* (Lille: Imprimerie Douriez-Bataille, 1928), 150.

76. Thompson, *Colonial Citizens*, 63; Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate*, 103.

77. "What the French Mission Saw in Syria," *Le Matin*, October 29, 1922. Thanks to Nathan Marcus for drawing this to my attention at the right time.

78. Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate*, 69.

79. Archives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva (hereafter ICRC), Archives Générales 1918–1950, Groupe Archives Des Commissions et Unités Operationelles, Sous Groupe MIS, Dossiers Missions 1919–32 (–1948) (all references below are from boxes in this group and subgroup unless stated), carton 40, Cotes 76, Mission en Syrie (hereafter 40/76/MS), undated report summer 1926.

80. TKA, box 1244, document 127, Telegram from Burnier, Beirut, to Turkish Red Crescent requesting cooperation with Schlemmer, December 30, 1925.

81. ICRC, carton 38, Cotes/Mission 66, Secours au Proche Orient, Minutes of ICRC meeting at Constantinople, November 17, 1922.

82. See usefully Işıl Acehan, "Ottoman Immigrants and the Formation of Turkish Red Crescent Societies in the United States," Center for Strategic Research, Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Spring 2015), accessed June 1, 2016, http://sam.gov.tr/ottoman-immigrants-and-the-formation-of-turkish-red-crescent-societies-in-the-united-states/.

83. Neep, *Occupying Syria under the French Mandate*, 61.

84. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut, to ICRC, Geneva, January 1, 1926.

85. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Schlemmer, Beirut to ICRC, Geneva, December 12, 1925.

86. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Belgian Red Cross to ICRC, Geneva, December 9, 1925; Spanish Red Cross to ICRC Geneva, December 14, 1925.

87. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut to ICRC, Geneva, January 1, 1926.

88. ICRC, Archives Générales 1918–1950, Groupe CR, Sous Groupe CR/00, Sociétés Nationales 1919–1950, CR00/61–225, Croix Rouge Syro-Brésilienne (CRSB), Correspondence April-June

1919 especially CRSB, Rio to ICRC, Geneva, May 15, 1919. The ICRC had refused them official status as a national Red Cross on the basis that Syria had to be an independent signatory of the Geneva Convention before it could have a national Red Cross organization.

89. ICRC, 40/76/MS, ICRC internal note "Visit of M. Ahmed Ishan Bey," December 11, 1925.

90. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Undated note on condition of refugees from the Biqa'.

91. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut to ICRC, Geneva, January 8, 1926.

92. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut to De Jouvenel, French High Commissioner, March 6, 1926.

93. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut, to Geneva ICRC, January 13, 1926 on competition for fundraising; Burnier, Beirut to De Jouvenel, French High Commissioner, March 6, 1926 on surveillance of Muslim Relief committee and money raised.

94. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut, to Geneva ICRC, January 13, 1926.

95. Friedhelm Hoffmann, *Die Syro-Palästinensische Delegation Am Völkerbund Und Šakīb Arslān in Genf, 1921–1936/46* (Berlin: Lit, 2007).

96. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Lutfallah, Cairo to ICRC, Geneva, December 24, 1925.

97. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Peter, Cairo to ICRC, Geneva, December 27, 1925. See on this theme writ large A. Dirk Moses's contribution to this dossier.

98. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut, to ICRC**,** Geneva, January 19, 1925.

99. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Lutfallah, Cairo to Peter, Cairo.

100. Compare here Sophia Hoffmann, "Disciplining Movement: State Sovereignty in the Context of Iraqi Migration to Syria" (Ph.D. diss., SOAS, University of London, 2011), 155–58. My thanks to Ben White for this reference.

101. ICRC, 40/76/MS, Burnier, Beirut, to ICRC, Geneva, January 1, 1926.

102. Watenpaugh, "Between Communal Survival and National Aspiration," 168; Dzovinar Kévonian, *Réfugiés et diplomatie humanitaire: Les acteurs européens et la scène proche-orientale pendant l'entre-deux-guerres* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2004).

103. League of Nations Archives, United Nations Organization Geneva, Health and Social Questions, 1919–1927, box R 641, document 42731/Dossier 4631, Report of the Commission for the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East, August 24, 1925, 7–8.

104. Bhuta, "The Antinomies of Transformative Occupation," 724.

105. Benjamin Thomas White, "Refugees and the Definition of Syria, 1920–1939," *Past & Present*, no. 235 (May 2017): 141–78.